United Nations UNW/2014/6

Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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Decisions adopted by the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women at its 2014 sessions

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Decisions

2014/1
Harmonization of reporting cycles

The Executive Board,

Recalls General Assembly resolutions 64/289 and 67/226 and further to Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/5, requests the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to consolidate the report on operational activities and the report on the implementation of the strategic plan into one report to be presented at its annual session, starting from 2014.

20 January 2014

2014/2
Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director on progress made on the strategic plan, 2011-2013, including operational activities in 2013

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director on the progress made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women strategic plan, 2011-2013, including operational activities in 2013;[1]

2. *Welcomes* the achievements made in the implementation of the first UN-Women strategic plan, 2011-2013,[2] as described in the report;

3. *Commends* UN-Women for the stronger results focus in the report, and further encourages UN-Women to continue to improve its results reporting, including reflections on lessons learned in the first progress report on the implementation of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, to be presented at the annual session of 2015;

4. *Takes note* of the efforts by UN-Women to include the mandates of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review on operational activities for development of the United Nations system[3] in its work;

5. *Requests* UN-Women to present to the Executive Board, at an informal meeting during the second regular session of 2014, an outline of the format of, and the information that will be provided in, the annual report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director;

6. *Takes note with concern* of the ongoing funding gap and urges all countries in a position to do so to increase their voluntary contributions, especially to regular resources, and requests UN-Women to further improve its efficiency,

[1] UNW/2014/2.
[2] UNW/2011/9.
[3] General Assembly resolution 67/226.

effectiveness, transparency and accountability to ensure full implementation of the strategic plan 2014-2017;[4]

7. *Decides* to transmit the report to the Economic and Social Council.

19 June 2014

2014/3
Report on the evaluation function, 2013

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* of the report on the evaluation function of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2013,[5] and the programme of work for 2014 of the independent Evaluation Office;[6]

2. *Welcomes* the efforts made by UN-Women and the progress achieved in systematic strengthening of the evaluation function;

3. *Also welcomes* the progress of UN-Women in leading system-wide gender evaluation efforts and the active involvement of the Entity in joint evaluations, and requests UN-Women to continue to present to the Executive Board joint evaluation reports and management response to joint evaluations;

4. *Requests* UN-Women to continue to strengthen its evaluation capacities and to allocate adequate human and financial resources to the Evaluation Office and the overall evaluation function;

5. *Emphasizes* that programme countries should have greater ownership and leadership in the evaluation of all forms of assistance, and requests UN-Women, in cooperation with other United Nations system organizations, to continue its efforts to facilitate the building of national evaluation capacities, where applicable;

6. *Commends* the efforts of UN-Women in fostering innovative partnerships for national evaluation capacity development;

7. *Requests* UN-Women to present a separate budget line for evaluation activities in the integrated budget for the biennium 2016-2017, to be considered by the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2015;

8. *Also requests* UN-Women to enhance the use of management response to evaluations and lessons learned from evaluations;

9. *Requests* the independent Evaluation Office to continue to pursue United Nations system-wide gender evaluation efforts, including through innovative partnerships.

19 June 2014

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[4] UNW/2013/6.
[5] UNW/2014/3.
[6] Ibid., sect. V.

2014/4
Report on internal audit and investigation activities for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2013

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* of the report on internal audit and investigation activities for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2013;[7]

2. *Expresses* its continuing support for the audit and investigation functions provided by the Office of Audit and Investigations;[8]

3. *Takes note* of the report of the Audit Advisory Committee and the management response thereto;[9]

4. *Notes with appreciation* UN-Women efforts to implement outstanding recommendations from previous reports and encourages UN-Women management to achieve the timely, full, complete and sustained implementation of all outstanding and new audit recommendations;

5. *Encourages* UN-Women to complement its regional architecture and organizational decentralization with effective oversight controls throughout the organization and with the comprehensive training necessary to fulfil management oversight and risk management responsibilities, as appropriate;

6. *Requests* UN-Women to present a separate budget line for internal audit and investigation activities in the integrated budget for the biennium 2016-2017, to be considered by the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2015;

7. *Also requests* UN-Women to present to the Executive Board, at its second regular session of each year, the annual report of the Board of Auditors;

8. *Further requests* UN-Women to incorporate in future reports information on the number, nature and outcomes of investigation cases conducted by the Office of Audit and Investigations.

19 June 2014

2014/5
Election of the Bureau of the Executive Board

The Executive Board,

1. *Encourages* regional groups to nominate candidates for the Bureau by the end of November of each year;

2. *Decides* to convene in early January of each year, starting in 2015, the first meeting of its first regular session, for the sole purpose of electing a new President and other members of the Bureau, in accordance with rule 7 of the rules of procedure.[10]

16 September 2014

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[7] UNW/2014/4.

[8] Of the United Nations Development Programme.

[9] UNW/2014/4/Add.1.

[10] See UNW/2011/6.

2014/6
Structured dialogue on financing

The Executive Board,

1. *Recalls* its endorsement of the strategic plan, 2014-2017,[4] including its development results framework and organizational effectiveness and efficiency framework, and reiterates its commitment to work with UN-Women to mobilize all required resources for its implementation;

2. *Notes* the importance of regular resources, which form the bedrock of the organization as they allow UN-Women to plan ahead, be strategic and responsive, strengthen accountability, transparency and oversight, advance United Nations coherence and coordination and provide predictable assistance in the field of gender equality and the empowerment of women;

3. *Urges* Member States in a position to do so, to commit, as early as possible, contributions to UN-Women regular resources for 2014 and onwards, if possible through multi-year pledges;

4. *Notes* the critical need to ensure the predictability and alignment to the strategic plan of contributions to other resources, which comprise a significant complement to the regular resource base;

5. *Notes* the efforts of UN-Women to broaden its donor base, including through new strategic partnerships with a wide range of partners;

6. *Recognizes* that UN-Women started at its inception with a low base of funding, and requests the Entity to continue to improve its effectiveness and efficiency including, as it grows, through maintaining management costs at an acceptable level, and to further strengthen its transparency and accountability in an effort to strengthen development results;

7. *Recalls* its decision 2013/2,[11] and in this regard encourages UN-Women, in the context of the planned review of the new cost-recovery methodology and the related rates in 2016, to propose adjustments, as required, for the consideration of the Executive Board, that may strengthen the incentives for providing more predictable core funding and more predictable and less earmarked non-core funding;

8. *Requests* UN-Women, through a dialogue with the Executive Board, to continue to explore incentives, mechanisms and funding windows to broaden the donor base and to encourage donors to increase their core contributions as well as to shift to less earmarked non-core funding, and towards this end requests the Entity to present to the Board a strategic brief for resource mobilization for consideration at its second regular session of 2015;

9. *Decides* to engage, on an annual basis, during the second regular session of the Executive Board, in a structured dialogue on financing with Member States to monitor and follow up on the level of funding, in particular of regular resources, as well as predictability, flexibility and alignment of other resources provided for the implementation of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, including information on funding gaps.

16 September 2014

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[11] See UNW/2013/11.

United Nations UNW/2014/7

Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Distr.: General
17 October 2014

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First regular session of 2015
9 February 2015
Item 1 of the provisional agenda
Organizational matters

Report on the second regular session, 15 and 16 September 2014

I. Organizational matters

1. The second regular session of 2014 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) was held at United Nations Headquarters on 15 and 16 September 2014.

2. The Executive Board adopted the provisional agenda and workplan for the second regular session (UNW/2014/L.4) and approved the report on its annual session of 2014, held from 17 to 19 June 2014 (UNW/2014/5). The Board also approved the proposed provisional agenda and workplan for the first regular session of 2015, to be held on 9 February 2015 (see annex) and discussed the draft annual workplan for 2015, in preparation for its adoption at the first regular session of 2015.

3. The Executive Board adopted two decisions: 2014/5, on the election of the Bureau of the Executive Board; and 2014/6, on the structured financing dialogue, as contained in the compilation of decisions adopted by the Board in 2014 (UNW/2014/6).

II. Opening statements

4. The President of the Executive Board, in his opening remarks, presented an overview of the agenda items before the Board. He remarked that the Board would have an opportunity to be briefed on preparations by UN-Women for the review and appraisal process of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It was, he said, a strategic moment, with the international community in the process of stepping up its efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals and at the same time, of drafting the post-2015 development agenda and working on the sustainable development goals. Member States would have such an opportunity only once in a generation, he stated, to bolster their positions with regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women and to place those goals at the forefront of

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the international community's agenda as well as their own national plans. Having gender equality identified as a cross-cutting issue among the sustainable development goals, he noted, was already an achievement. He urged Member States to continue to identify objectives for gender equality in the upcoming high-level forums of the United Nations.

5. In her opening remarks, the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women pointed out several initiatives she considered as highlights of her first year in office. These included the institutionalization of the Entity's civil society advisory groups (37 groups globally); the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, where Member States called for a stand-alone gender goal in the post-2015 development agenda; the imminent official launch of the "HeForShe"[1] campaign, a solidarity platform for men and boys in the promotion of gender equality; and the launch of a global mobilization campaign with respect to the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, with the convening of events in every region and the active involvement of civil society and Member States. In this regard, she called on delegations to ensure a record number of Heads of State participate in a global leaders' commitment forum, to be held in September 2015, which would mark the culmination of this worldwide campaign.

6. She stated that the Entity was in the process of gathering data from Member States on progress made in the past 20 years, thanking those who had already responded and urging others to complete their reports as soon as possible.

7. Early indications from the reports suggested that progress towards gender equality may be held back by external factors, some of which the Head of the Entity mentioned. She also indicated that there were some encouraging examples drawn from the early analyses of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, which would be incorporated into a report of the Secretary-General and used to lobby for change. "Where we have evidence and evaluation, we can push harder", she stated.

8. Turning to the main item on the agenda for the session, the Head of the Entity mentioned that UN-Women had invested $1.2 million in decentralized evaluations in the year 2013. The meta-analysis of those evaluations that was presented to the Board provided the strategic evidence base not only to strengthen the Entity, but also to make it more effective and results-oriented.

9. The main finding of the meta-analysis was that UN-Women programmes were relevant to international and national priorities and achieved planned results in spite of constrained funding and complex environments. This finding, coupled with the unqualified audit opinion issued by the Board of Auditors in July 2014 (see A/69/5/Add.12) constituted strong endorsements of the Entity's operations and underscored the commitment of UN-Women to full accountability.

10. On the implementation of the Entity's coordination mandate, she acknowledged the need for the United Nations system to operate at a much higher standard with respect to the representation of women, gender-responsive resource management and disaggregation of data. 2014 was the second year of reporting on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, in which the majority of United Nations entities participated.

[1] More information available from www.heforshe.org/.

11. Progress was noted in 14 of the 15 performance indicators of the Action Plan, including important advances in gender-responsive auditing, performance management, programme review and knowledge generation. Twenty-nine entities, departments and offices had gender policies, which are a key driver for strengthened accountability, with an additional 13 entities planning to develop such policies in 2014. However, many indicators continued to show less than favourable results, including as regards resource tracking, capacity assessment and coherence.

12. She reiterated that funding remains well below the original minimum budget of $500 million outlined by the Secretary-General in his report (A/64/588) and underscored that the latest projections for 2014 were dismal: $154 million in core contributions and early indications of approximately $120 million from non-core contributions. "It is self-evident that aspirations are currently far outstripping commitment", she stated, especially when considering that the gender equality goal was included in many of the proposed targets for the sustainable development goals (see A/68/970). She concluded that a radical rethink was needed to put funding for the Entity on a realistic footing.

13. Underlining that proposals on how to achieve a broader and more diverse donor base would be welcomed, she thanked Member States for initiating the structured dialogues on financing among the United Nations agencies and organizations and expressed the hope that the dialogues would result in more predictable, sustainable and flexible resources.

14. In concluding her statement, the Head of the Entity took the opportunity to express her gratitude and recognition to the Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programme for his contributions, as he would soon be leaving UN-Women. She also expressed her appreciation for another senior member of staff, the Director of Policy, who had retired earlier in the year.

III. Evaluation

15. The Chief of Evaluation of UN-Women presented the meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women in 2013. He explained that decentralized evaluations addressed evaluation questions relevant to local decision makers that can be strategically used to inform local and national policies and programmes. Decentralized evaluations may also provide rich insights to inform organizational strategies, policies and mechanisms. For this reason, a full meta-analysis was incorporated for the first time, into the corporate evaluation plan.

16. Meta-analyses are valuable as they provide important indications of key achievements and challenges. The meta-analysis aggregated and synthesized key findings, conclusions and recommendations of 23 evaluation reports that had met evaluation quality requirements. Although this represented a small sample of the total number of programmes managed by UN-Women, it also gave a good sense of the good quality of the evaluations managed by UN-Women in 2013. It was noteworthy that other United Nations entities with a much higher number of programmes, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), carried out meta-analyses based on a similar number of evaluations.

17. The Chief of Evaluation stated that the analysis considered the evaluation insights on the basis of three frameworks. The first was that of the United Nations Evaluation Group, which includes criteria regarding relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; impact; sustainability; and gender equality. The second was the framework of operational priorities of the Entity, in accordance with its strategic plan: coordination and partnership; a culture of results; and organizational effectiveness. The thirdly concerned the principles and approaches of the Entity: capacity development; national ownership; promoting inclusiveness; advocacy; and knowledge brokerage.

18. In outlining the key findings, recommendations and areas in need of strengthening, he underscored that the interventions evaluated were implemented during the years 2011-2012, a period of transition and consolidation for UN-Women. In this context, the overarching conclusion of the meta-analysis was that the Entity had achieved significant results while at the same time developing its own structure. As mentioned by the Head of the Entity in her opening statement, programmes were relevant to international and national priorities and achieved planned outputs in spite of constrained funding and complex environments.

19. In conclusion, the meta-analysis found that UN-Women performed well in relation to the priorities, principles and approaches of the strategic plan.

20. Following the presentation by the Chief of Evaluation, the Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programme presented the management response to the meta-analysis. He stated that significant progress was made in the transformation of UN-Women into a more field-focused, effective and results-oriented organization with fully-staffed country offices; internationally-recruited representatives; delegation of authority; inter-agency programme appraisal committees at the regional and country levels; civil society advisory groups; and strategic notes and annual workplans aligned to national priorities and planning cycles, through the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

21. The unique mandate of UN-Women and its strengthened country and regional presence provide the Entity with the ability to coordinate the work of United Nations country teams on gender equality. Where the Entity was not present or where other agencies were performing the coordination task effectively, UN-Women played a supporting role.

22. He acknowledged that while there was an urgent need for a more stable and predictable resource base to respond to the strong and emerging global consensus on gender equality and the empowerment of women, the management of UN-Women was confident that evaluation and analyses of more recent UN-Women programmes would capture many of the institutional changes and their effects on programme results.

23. In response to the opening statements and the presentation on Evaluation, several delegations reaffirmed their commitment to the Entity and expressed appreciation for the contribution of the outgoing Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programme during his tenure with UN-Women, wishing him well in his new endeavours.

24. They commended the independent Evaluation Office for its informative and comprehensive evaluation and hoped that UN-Women would continue to use such evaluations for learning and the dissemination of information among staff, as well

as for refining systems and business processes. A speaker applauded UN-Women for integrating the meta-analysis into its corporate evaluation plan, expressing the opinion that this was a useful way to review findings from decentralized evaluations and identify commonalities.

25. Delegations called attention to the areas in need of improvement, such as the strengthening of knowledge management systems. A delegation stated that a sufficient level of investment in monitoring and evaluation and other knowledge management systems was critical to the success of future programmes. Therefore, systemic weaknesses uncovered in the monitoring and evaluation practices of the Entity should be addressed. In addition, it was mentioned that UN-Women should consistently use measurable results frameworks based on realistic goals and objectives.

26. Of particular note, according to one speaker, was that many recommendations made within the past year or two had already been addressed, such as results-based reporting and the full delegation of authority to 50 field offices.

27. One speaker emphasized that the meta-analysis confirmed the need for strengthening the human resources capacity at every level and throughout a wide cross-section of stakeholders for gender equality programming in the various thematic areas.

28. Delegations underscored the importance of working together towards the achievement of gender equality and that all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes needed to be engaged in that work, while reiterating that United Nations system-wide coordination was a unique mandate of UN-Women and crucial in this regard. They noted, however, that the meta-analysis implied that the joint working modality was not entirely understood and that costs had at times been high in relation to results. It was felt that more mainstreaming efforts were therefore needed from the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes. In addition, they agreed with the recommendation that efforts towards the achievement of gender equality called for greater inclusion of men, especially with respect to their roles as family members, life partners and peer-to-peer educators.

29. A delegation referred to the evaluation document before the Board as an example to be emulated by all agencies within the United Nations system. The delegation joined others in stressing the importance of disseminating the findings and designing mechanisms which would allow for the effective transfer and systematization of the lessons learned and good practices. This would ensure a positive impact on organizational effectiveness and the achievement of UN-Women goals.

30. Regarding the findings of the meta-analysis, delegations underlined the importance of the mandate of UN-Women and of including and advocating for gender equality in global and national agendas. Working closely with civil society in this regard was viewed as essential to ensuring social ownership of the gender equality agenda.

31. It was emphasized that, without sufficient funding, UN-Women would not be in position to deliver on its very important mandate. Some speakers underscored that core funding was the key to enhancing the ability of UN-Women, at all levels, to work efficiently and effectively and demonstrate strong results on the ground.

32. Some delegations made mention of the visits by the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director to their countries and her participation in significant national events on the empowerment of women and girls. Reflecting on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, several speakers spoke of initiatives undertaken at the national level, elaborating on successes as well as challenges, while others highlighted preparations for the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action. A delegation commended UN-Women for conducting a comprehensive study on the progress made and challenges with respect to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at all levels, in accordance with the mandate given to the Commission by the Economic and Social Council, and looked forward to the results of the assessment, that would serve not only to inform the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, but as a point of reference for the realization of women's rights in the post-2015 development agenda.

33. Responding to Member States, the Head of the Entity concurred with the importance of the theory of change as highlighted and with references to need to focus on the long-term impact of programmes at the field level. There remained a gap between the practice and theory of implementation, however, which UN-Women was also committed to addressing.

34. The Head of UN-Women mentioned her recent country visits, including a visit to Japan, and thanked the delegation of Japan for highlighting, in its statement, the international symposium, entitled: "World Assembly for Women: WAW! Tokyo 2014: towards a society where women shine", which focused on the theme of "Women and the economy", among others, as part of the numerous global campaigns commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2015. She was particularly impressed that the Prime Minister of Japan was actively engaged as a thought leader and had participated in the entire event. She expressed the opinion that if world leaders were to follow the example of the Prime Minister of Japan, significant progress could be achieved in many parts of the world. In this vein, she challenged business schools to redesign their macroeconomics curricula in order to accurately reflect the role of women in the economy.

35. The Head of the Entity also spoke of her recent visit to Australia. She highlighted the role of the Department of Defence in advancing gender equality; the active role of the national committee for UN-Women; and the interactions she had had with the private sector; as well as her visit to the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, in Samoa, where the strong role of women was clearly demonstrated as necessary in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change. It was also significant to note, in the Pacific region, that the consequences of climate change had increased women's vulnerability to violence, which was an issue that required more attention.

IV. Briefings

A. Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and commemorative activities for the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women

36. The Assistant Secretary-General Deputy Executive Director for Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnerships updated the Board on the work and activities undertaken by UN-Women in preparation for the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. She highlighted the four objectives of the commemoration process:

(a) Renewing the political will and commitment of Member States, as well as taking concrete actions for the accelerated implementation of the Platform;

(b) Enhancing social mobilization and awareness-raising and revitalizing public debate across all sectors of society on achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment;

(c) Strengthening the evidence base to increase knowledge and enhance understanding of the structural underpinnings of gender discrimination and inequality, and of effective responses for creating more equal societies;

(d) Allocating enhanced and sufficient resources to, and investing in, achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment.

37. She outlined the key activities undertaken by the Entity, including national, regional and global reviews and appraisals; high-level events; global thematic events; and a communication and social mobilization campaign, targeting both traditional and new audiences, including youth, that aims at mass mobilization with a view to recapturing the spirit of the conference in Beijing. She urged Member States to begin thinking of initiatives to be launched during a formal commemoration of the twentieth anniversary, stating that initiatives could take the form of a constitutional amendment, legal reform or new law, a special measure, or a programme that would contribute to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women at the national, regional or global levels.

38. The Deputy Executive Director noted that this would not be an intergovernmental process and there would be no negotiated outcome. However, a report on the high-level meeting, summarizing key elements from the discussion and commitments of Member States and other actors, would be prepared and published.

B. Implementation of humanitarian work

39. The Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programme pointed out that the humanitarian strategy of UN-Women was developed in consultation with the Executive Board and other stakeholders and defined the Entity's coordination and leadership role in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian action, as well as contributing to the achievement of the strategic plan, 2014-2017. In addition to joint initiatives in partnership with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, he outlined others undertaken from the

normative, technical and inter-agency support perspectives, citing examples of work undertaken in the field, such as capacity-building for women's organizations in order to enable them to be included in humanitarian coordination and comprehensive gender analyses and thereby to inform humanitarian strategic response planning. He underscored the unprecedented demands in this area, against a backdrop of limited resources, and hence the need to be realistic about what is achievable. It was reiterated that the role of UN-Women was to complement and enhance the work of the other entities.

40. The next steps of the strategy implementation process were outlined:

(a) Roll-out of the joint initiative of UN-Women and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs;

(b) Mobilization of resources and partners to implement the humanitarian strategy;

(c) Continuation of work within the humanitarian system to ensure accountability for policy and operational commitments made to gender equality and women's empowerment;

(d) Continuous support to civil society organizations, women's groups and women's machinery in order to sustain country efforts.

41. Member States complimented UN-Women on work well done and welcomed the humanitarian strategy and partnership established with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Many stressed the significance of the Entity's work in the area of humanitarian action. Several Member States spoke of the significant increase in the political and humanitarian crises around the world and stressed that women, who often carry the burden of care, have been the most adversely affected, for example in the ongoing Ebola epidemic. Statements highlighted that women are increasingly being recognized as an integral part of emergency response, with a significant role to play in reconstruction.

42. While commending UN-Women for having its own humanitarian strategy, it was underscored that the Entity could add value to humanitarian action by fostering a more gender-sensitive approach from the planning stage, working with other actors in such areas as preparedness, disaster risk reduction, post-disaster needs assessment and early recovery. A speaker stressed that the Entity needed to take a more proactive approach in those areas and move beyond advocacy to more tangible and practical actions, especially for women affected by climate change, in order to focus more concretely on resilience-building.

43. There was a call for more to be done for the Pacific Islands region, which is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, in order to support the region in planning for and responding the different needs of women, men, boys and girls in disaster situations, through adequate monitoring and data collection.

44. Some delegations mentioned that UN-Women should continue in its efforts to better strategize approaches and prioritize areas of intervention. Member States welcomed closer partnership between UN-Women and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in order to advance gender equality programming in humanitarian action and looked forward to the Entity becoming a standing invitee of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, as soon as possible.

C. Operational response at the country level

45. The representative of UN-Women in Colombia and the Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programme presented a context analysis and highlighted the key results of the country programme regarding the promotion of gender equality, in addition to challenges and gaps in that regard.

46. Colombia, a middle-income country, currently has an annual economic growth rate of 4.1 per cent and was cited as one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America. In a population of almost 48 million, 51.6 per cent are women, with approximately 70 per cent of the population residing in urban areas. The rate of poverty had been reduced from 49.7 per cent of the population to 32.7 per cent of the population in the past ten years, and extreme poverty had similarly declined, from 17.7 per cent to 10.4 per cent.

47. While at the normative level, Colombia had been developing progressive legal frameworks and social policies since 1991, there were challenges in this respect, primarily at the level of implementation, as the adoption or entry into force of many laws were still very recent. Gaps remain in areas such as women in leadership, political participation and participation in decision-making forums; access to formal employment opportunities; ending violence against women; and strengthening peace and security. Responding to the request from the Government of Colombia for a strengthened UN-Women presence, the Entity entered into a bilateral host country agreement, which is currently under parliamentary procedure, and established one of its 10 country offices for the Latin America and Caribbean region in Colombia.

48. The representative of UN-Women further elaborated on the work of the Entity in Colombia with respect to the implementation of the strategic plan. The goals of UN-Women were threefold:

(a) To promote the rights of women and ensure their inclusion in leadership and peace and reconstruction processes;

(b) To promote the political and economic empowerment of women, end violence against women and girls and ensure access to justice;

(c) To lead and coordinate the work of the United Nations system entities in Colombia for greater impact in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

49. Key results were articulated under the framework of women's leadership and participation. It was underscored that gender equality was critical for the development and peace processes that formed the strategic vision of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and was in accordance with the priorities of the Government. The added value of UN-Women in this context was in leading the United Nations country team as regards coordination on gender equality; as a neutral and credible partner in, for example, supporting the efforts of the Government and boosting the capacity of civil society towards the implementation of laws; and as a knowledge broker on gender equality, including through the generation of knowledge, monitoring the situation of women, the promotion of learning and ensuring a basis for progress.

50. The Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations thanked UN-Women for selecting the programme in Colombia for presentation to the Board

at the second regular session, as an example of the Entity's work on the ground. She gave additional insight into the work of United Nations in Colombia in relation to the new platform of the Government's national plan, according to its three pillars: peace, equity and education.

51. Other speakers also commended UN-Women and the Government of Colombia for its work, underscoring the need to include women's voices in peace processes, noting that women have an essential role in ensuring long-term peace, and expressed the hope that the Entity would continue to work with other countries to share experiences and lessons learned.

V. Structured dialogues on financing

52. In her introduction to the discussion on financing, the Deputy Executive Director for Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnerships gave an overview of the budget and financial context of the Entity. She stressed that the resource base was well below what had been envisioned when the Entity was created, recalling that a minimum of $500 million was set by the Secretary-General. She reiterated that the agreed resource targets needed to be reached in order to fulfil the universal mandate of UN-Women; provide policy-based advocacy and technical support in programme countries; fully engage in coordination processes, particularly in complex coordination environments; be "fit for purpose"; and respond to the post-2015 development agenda.

53. Acknowledging that the Entity needed to attract more predictable multi-year capital, with a stronger core base, in order to be able to have the minimum critical mass required to implement its critical mandate, she outlined the imminent needs of UN-Women and highlighted the funding challenges, which included the following:

(a) Maintaining the upward trend and momentum to meet the annual funding targets leading up to the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

(b) Continuing to diversify and deepen the donor base for UN-Women;

(c) Increasing the contributions from the world's largest economies;

(d) Expanding the number of contributions from emerging donors;

(e) Soliciting flexible non-core contributions, linked to specific areas of the strategic plan;

(f) Strengthening end-of-year resource mobilization outreach for 2014 and future years.

54. She also expressed the hope that the top contributors to UN-Women would remain in that category and urged other Member States to assist the Entity in achieving its financial goals.

55. Member States welcomed the opportunity to engage in discussions on financing. One speaker stressed that, in spite of the Entity's best resource mobilization efforts, it was still faced with significant financial shortfalls. It was stressed that core resources must remain the bedrock of the organization and that the donor base needed to be further broadened and deepened. A delegation called for more donors to significantly increase their contributions to UN-Women, referring to

General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, wherein the Assembly recognized the need to strengthen the predictability, flexibility and alignment of funding to strategic plans.

56. Transparency was underlined as important for assisting donors in making informed funding decisions. In this vein, structured dialogues on financing were regarded as a step in the right direction. It was stressed that Executive Boards should be in a position to monitor funding more closely, in real time, ideally from a web-based platform, which in the view of one speaker, would be a useful tool for the Executive Board. The delegation expressed willingness to explore the possibility of supporting UN-Women in establishing such a platform.

57. A delegation expressed the view that structured dialogues on financing would be an opportunity for UN-Women to advise Member States on how they may best become involved in the work of the Entity and to ensure more and better quality funding. UN-Women was urged to provide background documentation in preparation for these dialogues on financing, and more generally for all sessions of the Executive Board, in advance of a given session, so that delegations would be in a position to advise and provide more meaningful comments.

58. A speaker requested that the resource mobilization strategy of UN-Women be tailored, since not every donor was necessarily in the same position (for example, differing fiscal calendars and financing arrangements). Another delegation proposed exploring the creation of incentives for donors.

59. In responding to questions and comments from the floor, it was highlighted that UN-Women was a member of the Transparency and Accountability Initiative and was in the process of providing financial data on projects and programmes. However, the Entity was not yet in a position to provide the depth of data presented by other United Nations entities that had started the process much earlier.

60. It was agreed that UN-Women would continue to discuss the financing of the Entity with delegations and take into consideration the thematic priorities of Member States.

VI. Closing of the session

61. The Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director thanked the President and the members of the Bureau for their work in preparing for the second regular session and expressed her appreciation for the Board's oversight function and guidance. She noted the areas of focus emphasized by delegations that would enable the Entity to craft and implement a new transformative development agenda.

62. The Head of the Entity reaffirmed that UN-Women planned to promote strong visibility for the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, through a dynamic and forward-looking process of advocacy.

63. Regarding the work of UN-Women on humanitarian action, she also thanked the Board for its strong support for the Entity having permanent representation in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee with regard to its work in the area of humanitarian assistance. This area was particularly important, she emphasized, given the unprecedented scope of emergencies across the globe. She expressed deep

concern for the ongoing Ebola epidemic, particularly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

64. The decision of the Board to convene an annual structured dialogue on financing (see UNW/2014/6, decision 2014/6), she stated, was indicative of a move towards a more robust and systematic process for resource mobilization, which would remain a priority for UN-Women. UN-Women would also evaluate its experience of non-core funding and provide analyses thereon. In addition, the Entity would showcase flagship programmes that could attract non-core resources. She looked forward to an increase in multi-year contributions, which would facilitate the planning of long-term programmes, and concluded by emphasizing "This is the moment that we need you to match your ambition for us with the resources to accomplish it".

Annex

Proposed provisional agenda and workplan for the first regular session of 2015

Provisional agenda

1. Organizational matters
2. Evaluation
3. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters
4. Audit matters
5. Other matters

Day	*Time*	*Item*	*Subject*
Monday 9 February	10 a.m.-11 a.m.		Opening of the session • Statements by the President of the Executive Board and the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director
		1	Organizational matters • Adoption of the annotated provisional agenda for the first regular session of 2015 • Adoption of the report on the second regular session of 2014 (UNW/2014/7)
	11 a.m.-12 p.m.	2	Evaluation • Assessment of the evaluation function
	12 p.m.-1 p.m.		Briefing on transforming gender relations: the work of UN-Women with men and boys and the "HeforShe"campaign
	1.30 p.m.-2.30 p.m.		Informal briefing on the operational response of the Entity at the country level
	3 p.m.-4.30 p.m.	3	Financial, budgetary and administrative matters • Briefing on financing the strategic plan, 2014-2017
	4.30 p.m.-5.30 p.m.	4	Audit matters • Briefing on the report of the Board of Auditors (A/69/5/Add.12)

Day	*Time*	*Item*	*Subject*
	5.30 p.m.-6 p.m	5	Other matters
		1	Organizational matters • Approval of the provisional agenda for the annual session of 2015 • Adoption of the draft annual workplan for 2015
			Closing of the session • Statements by the President of the Executive Board and the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director